

XVII

THE SPANIARDS ARE REUNITED IN PÁNUCO. BITTER QUARRELS ARISE AMONG THEM, AND THE REASONS FOR THESE

Gonzalo Quadrado Xaramillo and his companion Francisco Muñoz, whom we left marching along the coast, did not pause all night, and at dawn they reached the mouth of the Río de Pánuco, where they learned that the governor and his five caravels had entered safely and were going up the river. Encouraged by this good news, they did not want to stop and rest, but though they had marched twelve leagues that night without resting, they hastened their journey still more and traveled three leagues farther. At eight o'clock in the morning they reached the place where the governor and his men were, very sad and anxious in their fears that the two caravels they had left in the great storm at sea had been lost. It was still raging, nor did it cease for another five days thereafter.

But with the presence and the report of these two good companions, their grief and anxiety was changed to content and joy, and they gave thanks to God who had saved them from death. On the following day they received the letter that the Indian brought them, to which the governor replied that after they had rested as long as they wished they were to go to the city of Pánuco where he would await them, so they could all put their lives in order.

Eight days after the shipwreck all our Spaniards had assembled with the governor in Pánuco, and they numbered almost three hundred.⁴⁷ They were very well received by the vecinos and inhabitants of that city, who, though they were poor, showed them all the courtesy and good hospitality that they could. For among them were very noble gentlemen, and it aroused their pity to see them so disfigured, black, lean, wasted, barefoot, and unclothed. They wore no other garments except those of deerskin, cowhide, and the skins of bears and lions and other wild animals, so they looked more like wild beasts and brutish animals than human beings. The *corregidor* at once advised the viceroy Don Antonio de Mendoza, who resided in México, sixty leagues from Pánuco, how almost three hundred Spaniards had come out of

⁴⁷The Gentleman of Elvas gives the number of survivors as 311. Ignacio Avellaneda considers the latter figure accurate, and he has accounted for 257 of these by name. Ignacio Avellaneda, *Los Sobrevivientes de La Florida: The Survivors of the De Soto Expedition* (Gainesville: University of Florida, P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, 1990).

La Florida, of the thousand who had entered it with the adelantado Hernando de Soto. The viceroy sent to order the corregidor to entertain and treat them as his own person, and that when they were ready to travel he was to supply them with everything they needed and send them to México.

Following this message, he sent shirts and sandals and four pack mules laden with conserves and other delicacies and medicines for the sick, for our Spaniards, in the belief that they were ailing. But they were in perfect health though they lacked everything else necessary for human life.

At this point the accounts of Juan Coles and Alonso de Carmona say that the *Cofradía de la Caridad* [Brotherhood of Charity] of México sent these gifts by order of the viceroy.

It must be told now that when General Luis de Moscoso de Alvarado and his captains and soldiers found themselves reunited and had rested ten or twelve days in that city, the most prudent and informed among them observed attentively the mode of life of its inhabitants, which was then miserable enough, because they had no mines of gold or silver or any other wealth of which to avail themselves. They had only such scanty foods as the land afforded, and raised a few horses to sell to those who came from other places to buy them. Most of them dressed in ordinary cotton cloth, very few wearing clothing from Castilla, and the richest vecinos and principal lords of vassals had no wealth except what we have mentioned, though some were beginning to raise cattle in very small numbers. They busied themselves in planting mulberries for silk-culture and in setting out other fruit trees from Spain in order to enjoy their fruits in the future. The rest of their possessions and household equipment corresponded to the things that have been described. All the houses in which they lived were poor and humble, most of them being made of straw. In short, our Spaniards noted that everything they had seen in the pueblo represented no more than the beginnings of settling and cultivating miserably a country that was not as good as the one that they had left behind them and abandoned. They saw that in place of the cotton clothing that the vecinos of Pánuco wore, they could have dressed in very fine deerskins of many and varied colors, such as those they brought with them, and could have worn mantles of marten-skins and other very beautiful and elegant pelts, of which as we have said they have most handsome ones in La Florida. They would not have been forced to plant mulberries for growing silk, since they had found them in such quantities as has been seen, along with the other timber such as three varieties of walnuts, plums, live oaks, and oaks, and the abundance of grapevines that grow in the fields.

In thus comparing these things with the others, the memory of the many and fine provinces that they had discovered was emphasized. Those named alone amount to forty, not counting the others that have been forgotten and still others whose names it has been impossible to learn. They remembered the fertility and abundance of all of them, their advantages for producing crops of grain and vegetables that could be introduced from Spain, and their facilities in the form of pasture grounds, commons, woodlands, and rivers for the breeding and increase of the cattle that they might wish to put into them.

Finally, they carried the memory of the great wealth of pearls and seed pearls that they had despised, and the grandeurs that they had dreamed of for themselves, because each one of them had seen himself the lord of a great province. Comparing now, therefore, those abundances and seigniories with the present miseries and poverty, they told one another their imaginings and sad thoughts, and in their great heaviness of heart and pity for themselves, they said: "Could not we have lived in La Florida just as these Spaniards are living in Pánuco? Were not the lands that we left better than these where we are? If we wished to stop and settle, would we not be better off there than are our present hosts here? Perhaps they have more silver and gold mines than we found, and more riches than those we disdained? Is it not a fine thing that we have come to receive alms and hospitality from others who are poorer than we, when we could have entertained everyone from Spain? Is it just or becoming to our honor that, from the lords of vassals that we could have been, we have come to beg? Would it not have been better to die there than to live here?"

With these words and similar ones arising from their regret over the good things they had lost, they became enraged with one another, in such fury and anger that, desperate with grief at having abandoned La Florida where they might have won so much wealth, they fell to stabbing one another in their rage and desire to kill. Their greatest ire and wrath was directed against the officials of the real hacienda and against the captains and soldiers, nobles and others from Sevilla, because these had been the ones who, after Governor Hernando de Soto's death, had insisted most strongly that they leave La Florida and abandon it. They also had been most persistent in forcing Luis de Moscoso to make that long journey that they made to the province of the Vaqueros. On that road, as was seen at the time, they suffered so many inconveniences and hardships that a third of them and of the horses died. The lack [of horses] was the final cause of their all being lost, because it forced and impelled them to leave the country quickly. They could not stay

or ask for the reinforcements that the adelantado Hernando de Soto had planned to request by dispatching the two brigantines that he had proposed to send down the Río Grande to give notice in México, in the islands of Cuba and Santo Domingo, and in Tierra Firme of what he had discovered in La Florida, so that they might send him assistance for settling the country. This aid could have been given them very easily because of the capaciousness of the Río Grande, by which any ship or fleet could enter and leave.

All these things being now clearly seen and considered by those who had held the contrary opinion and had wished to carry forward the proposals of Governor Hernando de Soto and to settle and establish themselves in La Florida, and seeing now from experience that they had been right in desiring to remain, and their present cause for indignation against the officials and those of their faction, their fury blazed up in such manner that, losing all respect for them, they went in pursuit of them with knives, so that some were killed and wounded. The captains and royal officials did not dare come out of their lodgings, and the soldiers were so enraged against one another that all the people of the city were unable to pacify them. These and other results arise from decisions made without prudence or counsel.

XVIII

HOW THE SPANIARDS WENT TO MÉXICO, AND THE WARM WELCOME THAT FAMOUS CITY GAVE THEM

The corregidor of Pánuco, seeing such discord among our Spaniards and that it was increasing day by day, being unable to stop it, sent a report to the viceroy Don Antonio de Mendoza. He ordered that they be sent immediately to México in bands of ten or twenty, directing that those who went in each group should be of the same party and not opposed, so that they would not kill one another on the way.

In accordance with this order and command, they set out from Pánuco twenty-five days after they had entered it.

Along the road both Castilians and Indians came out in great multitudes to see them, and they wondered at seeing Spaniards, on foot, dressed in the skins of animals and bare-legged, for the best provided among them had managed to get little more than the sandals that they gave them out of charity. They were astonished to see them so black and disfigured, and said that

their appearance showed clearly the hardships, hunger, misery, and persecutions that they had suffered. Rumor, performing its office, had already spread great reports about these things throughout the kingdom, and therefore Indians and Spaniards entertained them very affectionately and attentively, and served and regaled them all along the road until, proceeding in bands as they did, they entered the most famous city of México, which because of its grandeurs and wonders today, has the name and preeminence of being the best city in the world. They were received and entertained there by the viceroy as well as by the other vecinos, gentlemen, and rich men of the city, who regarded them so highly that they insisted upon taking them in groups of five or six to their houses and entertained them as if they had been their own sons.

Juan Coles says at this point that a leading gentleman and vecino of México, named Xaramillo, took eighteen men to his house, all being from Extremadura, and that he dressed them in fine cloth [*paño veintiguatrexo*] from Segovia, and gave each one of them a bed with a mattress, sheets, blankets, and pillows, and a comb, brush, and all the rest needed by a soldier. He said that the whole city was moved by compassion at seeing them dressed in deerskin and cowhides, and that they accorded them this honor and charity because of the many hardships that they knew they had endured in La Florida. On the other hand they had been unwilling to do any favors for those who had gone with Captain Juan Vázquez Coronado, a vecino of México, to discover the Seven Cities, because they had returned to México without any necessity whatever, not being willing to make a settlement. These people had gone out a little before ours. All these statements are from the account of Juan Coles, a native of Zafra, and that of Alonso de Carmona agrees with it in every respect. He adds that among those whom Xaramillo took to his house was a relative of his; it must have been our Gonzalo Quadrado Xaramillo.

So that it may be seen how closely these two eyewitnesses conform with one another in many parts of their accounts, it seems fitting for me to include here the words of Alonso de Carmona, as I have included those of Juan Coles. They are as follows:

I have said already that we left Pánuco in bands of fifteen or twenty soldiers, and thus we entered the great city of México. We did not enter in one day, but in four, because each party went in separately. They accorded us such charity in that city that I do not know how to tell of it here, for when a band of soldiers entered the city those citizens immediately came out to the plaza, and

he who reached them first considered himself fortunate. Each one wanted to do more than the rest, and thus they took them to their houses and gave them their own beds, and then ordered enough stuff to be brought to dress them in fine black cloth from Segovia. They clothed them and gave them everything else they needed, which included shirts, doublets, caps, hats, knives, scissors, head cloths, and hoods, and even combs with which to comb their hair. After dressing them, they took them to mass on Sunday, and after eating with them, they said: "Brothers, the country is large, and you can make a place for yourselves, each one seeking his own fortune." A vecino from Extremadura was there whose name was Xaramillo. He went out to the plaza and found a band of twenty soldiers, and among them a relative of his, and he treated them all so well that no one could rival him. All the members of my group decided to go and kiss the hands of Viceroy Don Antonio de Mendoza, and though other vecinos invited us to their houses we did not wish to go with them. After we had kissed his hands, the viceroy ordered that food be served to us, and we were lodged in a large room. They gave each one a bed with mattress, sheets, pillows, and blankets, all of them new. He ordered that we should not leave until we were clothed, and after we were dressed we kissed his hands and left his house, thanking him for the favors and charity that he had granted us. We all went to El Perú, not so much because of its wealth as because of the disturbances that were taking place there when Gonzalo Pizarro began to make himself governor and ruler of the country.

With this Alonso de Carmona ends the account of his peregrination, and all these are his own words, copied literally.

The viceroy, being such a good prince, seated all of our men who came to eat at his table with much attention, making no difference between captain and soldier and between a gentleman and him who was not, because he said that, since all had been equal in exploits and hardships, they ought to be [equal] also in the little honor that he was able to show them. He not only honored them at his table and in his house, but he ordered proclaimed throughout the city that no other magistrate except himself was to take cognizance of the cases that might come up among our people. He did this, aside from wishing to honor and favor them, because he knew that an *alcalde ordinario* had arrested and put in the public prison two soldiers of La Florida who had stabbed each other because of the quarrels that had arisen among them all in Pánuco, and that flared up again in México with more smoke and fire of wrath and ill-feeling because they saw the esteem in which the gentlemen and principal men of wealth in that city held the things that they brought out of La Florida, such as the fine deerskins of all colors. For it is

true that as soon as they saw them they made very elegant trousers and doublets from them.

They also valued highly the few pearls and some strings of seed pearls that they had brought, because they commanded a high price.

But when they saw the mantles of marten-skins and other pelts that our men brought, they esteemed them above all the rest. Although, because they had been used for mattresses and blankets, for lack of other bed-clothing, they were full of resin and pitch from the ships, and soiled with dust and mud that came from being walked on and dragged on the ground, they had them washed and cleaned, for they were extremely fine. They lined their best clothing with them and wore it to the plaza as very elegant and ornamental attire, and he who was unable to obtain a fur lining for his whole cape or cloak contented himself with a collar of marten-skins or other pelts, which he wore outside with the frill of his shirt as a valued and much prized adornment. All these things were the cause of greater desperation, regret, and anger to our people, seeing that such important and rich men thought so highly of that which they had despised. They remembered that they had inconsiderately abandoned lands that they had discovered at such cost to themselves, where these things and others as good existed in such abundance. They recalled the words that Governor Hernando de Soto had said to them in Quiguate about the mutiny that had been plotted in Mauvila with the intention of going to México, abandoning La Florida. Among other things he had said to them: "Why do you wish to go to México? To show the cowardice and weakness of your spirits, when you could be lords of so great a kingdom where you have discovered and traversed so many and such beautiful provinces, you have thought it better (in abandoning them through your pusillanimity and cowardice) to go and lodge in a strange house and eat at another's table, when you could have your own in which to entertain and do good to many others?" It seems that these words were a very accurate prophecy of the regret and sorrow that tormented them at present, for which reason they stabbed one another to death without regard for or memory of the companionship and brotherhood that had existed among them. In the course of these quarrels there occurred in México also, as well as in Pánuco, some deaths and many wounds.

The viceroy pacified them with all gentleness and suavity, seeing that they were beside themselves, and to console them he promised and gave his word to make the same conquest if they desired to go back to it. And it is true that having heard of the advantages of the kingdom of La Florida he desired to make the expedition, and thus he gave many of our captains and soldiers

subsidies and gratuities, and offices and employments with which to maintain and occupy themselves while preparations were made for the expedition. Many accepted these, and many did not wish to do so, in order not to obligate themselves to return to a country they had abhorred, and also because they had fixed their eyes on El Perú, as appears from the following incident that took place about that time. It happened thus.

A soldier named Diego de Tapia—whom I knew afterward in El Perú, where he served his Majesty very well in the wars against Gonzalo Pizarro, Don Sebastián de Castilla, and Francisco Hernández Girón—while they were making him a suit, went about through the city of México dressed entirely in skins, just as he had come out of La Florida. As a wealthy citizen saw him in that garb and as he was of small stature and appeared to be one of the very destitute, he said to him: "Brother, I have an *estancia* for cattle raising near the city, where, if you wish to serve me, you may live a quiet and peaceful life, and I will give you good wages." Diego de Tapia, with an expression like a lion or a bear, in whose skin he was perchance dressed, replied: "I am going now to El Perú, where I expect to have more than twenty *estancias*. If you want to go with me and work for me, I will accommodate you with one of them, so that you can come back wealthy in a very short time." The citizen of México departed without saying another word, it seeming to him that, with a few more [words], he would not come out of the business very well.

XIX

THEY GIVE AN ACCOUNT TO THE VICEROY OF THE MOST NOTABLE THINGS THAT OCCURRED IN LA FLORIDA

Among the principal vecinos and gentlemen of México who entertained our men in their houses, it happened that the factor Gonzalo de Salazar, whom we mentioned at the beginning of this *History*, took Gonzalo Silvestre to his house. Talking with him about many things that took place during this discovery, they came to discuss the beginning of their navigation and what occurred on the first night after they left San Lúcar, and how the two generals found themselves in danger of being sunk. During this conversation the factor learned that Gonzalo Silvestre was the one who had ordered the two

cannon-shots fired at his ship for having gone ahead of the fleet and placed itself to the windward of the flagship, as we described at length in the First Book of this *History*. For this reason from that time on he honored him even more, saying that he had acted like a good soldier, though he said also that it would have gratified him to see Governor Hernando de Soto in order to talk to him about what happened that night.

The factor learned later, from other soldiers, of the good fortune that Gonzalo Silvestre had had in the province of Tula in cutting an Indian in two at the waist with one stroke, and on seeing the sword, which was an old one of the sort that we now call *viejas*, he asked for it to place in his cabinet as a very choice ornament. When he learned that he had given the strip or banner of fine marten-skins decorated with pearls and seed pearls—which we said he got in the pueblo where they obtained food on their way down the Río Grande, where they abandoned the horses because the Indians hurried them so—to his host in Pánuco in return for the hospitality that he had accorded him, he was very regretful, saying that he would have given him 1,500 pesos for it, solely for the pleasure of having such a curiosity as this banner in his room, for the factor was truly most interested in such things.

On the other hand, the whole city of México in general and the viceroy and his son Don Francisco de Mendoza in particular enjoyed greatly hearing about the incidents of the discovery of La Florida, and thus they asked that they be told to them as they occurred. They were astonished when they heard of the many cruel torments that his master Hirrihigua had given to Juan Ortiz, of the generosity and admirable spirit of the good Mucoço, of the terrible pride and bravado of Vitachuco, and of the constancy and fortitude of his four captains and of the three young sons of lords of vassals whom they pulled out of the lake almost drowned. They noted the ferocity and indomitable spirit that the Indians of the province of Apalache showed, the flight of their crippled cacique, and the strange things that took place in the armed encounters in that province, as well as the very laborious journey that the thirty horsemen made in going from and returning to it.

They marveled at the great wealth of the temple of Cofachiqui, its grandeur and sumptuousness, and the abundance of various kinds of arms, with the multitude of pearls and seed pearls that the Spaniards found in it; and the hunger that they endured in the wilderness before arriving there. It pleased them to hear of the courtesy, discretion, and beauty of the lady of that province of Cofachiqui, and of the curaca Coça's kindness and generosity in offering his state as a site for a Spanish establishment. They were astonished to hear of the gigantic size of the cacique Tascaluça and his son, who was like

his father, and of the bloody and obstinate battle of Mauvila, and of the surprise of Chicaça and the mortality of men and horses in these two battles and in that of the fort of Alibamo. They were interested in hearing about the laws against adultery. They were grieved by the want of salt that our people experienced, and the horrible deaths caused by lack of it; and by the very long and useless peregrination that they made because of the secret discord that arose among the Spaniards, which was the reason for their not making a settlement. They were very gratified by the adoration of the cross that was performed in the province of Casquin, and by the pleasant and comfortable winter that the Spaniards spent in Utiangue. They abhorred the monstrous deformity that those of Tula gave their heads and faces by artificial means, and the ferocity of their spirit and nature, corresponding to their appearance.

The death of Governor Hernando de Soto grieved them very much, and they mourned over the two burials that his people gave him. On the contrary, they were much gratified to hear of his exploits, his invincible spirit, his promptness in attacks and alarms, his patience in hardships, his courage and valor in fighting, and his discretion, wisdom, and prudence in peace and in war. When they told the viceroy of his death having cut short his plans for sending two brigantines down the Río Grande to ask assistance from his Excellency, and how (from what they had seen in their navigation to the sea) he could have given it very easily, he was very regretful and blamed greatly the general and captains who remained for not having proceeded with and carried forward the proposals of Governor Hernando de Soto, for they were of such advantage and honor to all of them. He swore with great oaths that he himself would have gone to the mouth of the Río Grande with reinforcements so that they would have been better and more promptly aided. And all the gentlemen and principal men of México said the same.

The viceroy was also pleased to hear of the beauty and fine appearance the natives of La Florida usually have; of the Indians' strength and courage, the ferocity and skill they show in shooting with their bows and arrows, the very wonderful and admirable shots that they make with them; the daring spirit that many of them exhibit individually, and that they all have in common; the perpetual warfare that they wage upon each other; the punctiliousness in affairs of honor they found in many of the caciques; the fidelity of the captain-general Anilco; the defiance that the cacique Guachoya made; the league of Quigualtanqui with the ten caciques who conspired with him; the punishment that they gave his ambassadors; the labors that our men underwent in building the seven brigantines; the great flood on the Río

Grande; the Spaniards' embarkation; the fine spectacle afforded by the multitude of canoes that appeared before them at dawn; and the cruel persecution that they gave them until they drove them entirely beyond their boundaries.

The viceroy also desired particularly to learn of the nature of the lands of La Florida. He was much pleased to hear that there was such an abundance of fruit trees like those of Spain in them, such as various kinds of plums and three varieties of walnuts, one with nuts so oily that the oil ran out when the kernel was pressed between the fingers; such quantities of acorns from oaks and live oaks; such an abundance of fine mulberries, and so many productive vines bearing very good grapes. Finally, the viceroy was very gratified to hear of the extensiveness of that kingdom, the advantages that it had for raising all kinds of cattle, and the fertility of the soil for crops of grain, fruit, and vegetables. All these things increased the viceroy's desire to make the conquest, but despite his efforts he was unable to induce the men who had come out of La Florida to remain in México in order to return there. On the contrary, within a few days after their arrival they were scattered in various places, as we shall soon see.

XX

OUR SPANIARDS ARE SCATTERED THROUGH VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD. THE EFFORTS OF GÓMEZ ARIAS AND DIEGO MALDONADO TO OBTAIN NEWS OF HERNANDO DE SOTO

The accountant Juan de Añasco, the treasurer Juan Gaytán, and Captains Baltasar de Gallegos, Alonso Romo de Cardenosa, Arias Tinoco, and Pedro Calderón, and others of less importance returned to Spain, choosing to go there poor rather than to remain in the Indies, because of their abhorrence of them, as well as because of the hardships they had suffered there and of what they had lost from their estates, they themselves having been the cause in most cases of the one and the other being wasted without any advantage whatever. Gómez Suárez de Figueroa returned to the house and estate of his father, Vasco Porcallo de Figueroa y de la Cerda.

Others who were more discreet entered religious orders, following the good example that Gonzalo Quadrado Xaramillo gave them, he being the first to take the habit. He chose to heighten his nobility and his past exploits

by becoming a true soldier and nobleman of Jesus Christ our Lord, enlisting under the banner and standard of such a *maese de campo* and general as the seraphic father St. Francis, in whose Order and profession he died, having shown by his works that the true nobility and consummate courage that please and gratify God are acquired in religion. Because of this action, which as it had been performed by Gonzalo Quadrado, was much more observed and noted than if it had been done by anyone else, many of our Spaniards did the same, entering various religious orders so as to honor all their past lives by making such a good end.

Others, and these were fewest, remained in New Spain. Among them was Luis Moscoso de Alvarado, who married in México a rich and important woman who was a relative of his.

Most of them went to El Perú, where in all the events of the wars against Gonzalo Pizarro and Don Sebastián de Castilla and Francisco Hernández Girón, they conducted themselves in the service of the Crown of Spain like men who had passed through the hardships we have described. Even so it is true that we have not told a tenth part of what they actually endured.

In El Perú I knew many of these gentlemen and soldiers, who were very esteemed and acquired a great deal of property, but I do not know that any of them have managed to obtain *repartimientos* of Indians such as they could have had in La Florida.

In order to finish our *History*, which through the favor of the heavenly Creator we see now approaching its end, nothing more remains for us to tell except what Captains Diego Maldonado and Gómez Arias did after Governor Hernando de Soto sent them to La Havana with orders as to what they were to do in that summer and the following autumn, as was told in its place. Therefore it will be well to tell here what these two good gentlemen performed in compliance with their orders and their own obligation, so that their generous spirits and the loyalty they showed for their captain-general may not be forgotten, but recorded as an honor to them and an example to others.

Captain Diego Maldonado, as we said above, went with the two brigantines under his orders to La Havana to visit Doña Isabel de Bobadilla, the wife of Governor Hernando de Soto. He was to return with Gómez Arias, who had made the same voyage shortly before, and the two captains were to take between them two brigantines and the caravel and such other ships as they could buy in La Havana, laden with provisions, arms, and munitions. In the following autumn, which was in the year 1540, they were to take them to the port of Achusi which Diego de Maldonado himself had discovered.

Governor Hernando de Soto was to come out there, having made a large circle in exploring the interior country. This was not done, on account of the discord and secret mutiny that the governor discovered his men had plotted. For this reason he withdrew from the sea and went inland, where nearly all of them were lost.

Thus now it must be told that when Gómez Arias and Diego Maldonado had joined one another in La Havana and paid the visit to Doña Isabel de Bobadilla, and sent a report throughout all those islands of what they had discovered in La Florida, and what the governor was asking for to begin a settlement in that country, they purchased three ships and loaded them with food, arms, munitions, calves, goats, colts, mares, sheep, and [seeds of] grain, barley, and vegetables, in order to make a beginning of raising animals and plants. They also loaded the caravel and the two brigantines, and, if they had had two more ships, there would have been enough cargo for all of them, since the inhabitants of the islands of Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Jamaica, because of the good reports they had heard of La Florida and of their love for the governor, and for their own interests, had made an effort to assist him in every way they could. Diego Maldonado and Gómez Arias went to the port of Achusi with these things, to the place designated. Not finding the governor there, the two captains went out in command of the brigantines and coasted along the shore, one in either direction, to see whether the Spaniards might have come out at some other point to the east or west. Wherever they went they left signs on the trees and wrote letters, which they put into their hollow trunks, giving an account of what they had done and expected to do in the following summer. And when the severity of the winter would permit them to navigate no longer, they returned to La Havana with the sad news that they had none of the governor. But this did not keep them from returning in the summer of the year 1541 to the coast of La Florida and following it all the way to the lands of México and to Nombre de Dios, and along the eastern shore to the Tierra de Bacallaos, to see whether by some means or manner they could get news of Governor Hernando de Soto. Being unable to do so, they went back to La Havana in the winter.

Then in the next summer, of the year 1542, they went back to the same search, and having spent almost seven months in doing the same thing as before, they were forced by the weather to go back and winter in La Havana. At the beginning of the spring of the year 1543, though they had obtained no news whatsoever for the past three years, they set out again, persisting in their enterprise and search with the determination not to desist from it until

they died or got news of the governor. For they could not believe that the land would have consumed them all, but that some of them must have come out somewhere. They traveled on this quest all that summer as in the preceding ones, suffering the hardships and inconveniences that may be imagined. To avoid prolixity, we shall not tell of them in detail.

XXI

THE PEREGRINATION OF GÓMEZ ARIAS AND DIEGO MALDONADO CONTINUES

Traveling thus with such anxiety and care, they arrived at La Vera Cruz in mid-October of the same year 1543, where they learned that their comrades had left La Florida, that less than three hundred of them had escaped, and that Governor Hernando de Soto had died there, along with all the rest who had perished out of nearly a thousand who had entered that kingdom. They learned in detail of all the misfortunes that had befallen the expedition. With this sad and lamentable news those two good and loyal gentlemen returned to La Havana and gave it to Doña Isabel de Bobadilla. As the grief and anxiety that she had felt continuously for three years at not having heard from her husband were now increased by this new sorrow of his death and the failure of the conquest, and by the waste and loss of his property, the fall of his estate, and the ruin of his house, she died soon after learning of it.

This tragedy, lamentable because of the loss of the many and excessive efforts made by the Spanish nation without profit or benefit to the country, was the end and outcome of the discovery of La Florida, which the adelantado Hernando de Soto made at such expense to his own fortune, and with so much equipment of arms and horses and so many noble gentlemen and valiant soldiers as we have told elsewhere. In none of the other conquests of all those that have been made in the New World up to the present has there been assembled such a fine and brilliant company of men, so well armed and disciplined, nor so many horses as were collected for this one. All of this was consumed and lost without any gain for two reasons. First, because of the discord that arose among them, for which reason they did not make a settlement at the beginning. Second, because of the governor's untimely death; if he had lived two years longer, he would have repaired the past damage by

means of the reinforcements that he was going to request, and that could have been sent him by way of the Río Grande, as he had planned.

Thus it was possible that he could have laid the foundations of an empire that could compete today with New Spain and El Perú, because in the extent and fertility of the land and in its advantages for cultivation and cattle raising it is not inferior to any of the others. On the other hand it is believed that it has the advantage of them, for as to wealth we have already seen the incredible quantity of pearls and seed pearls that were found in only one province or temple, and the marten-skins and other rich furs that appertain solely to kings and great princes, aside from the other grandeurs to which we have referred at length.

There may be gold and silver mines, and I do not doubt that they would have been found if they had been sought for carefully. When they were won, neither México nor El Perú had the ones that they now have. Those of the Cerro de Potosí were discovered fourteen years after Governors Don Francisco Pizarro and Don Diego Almagro undertook their enterprise of the conquest of El Perú. The same thing could have been done in La Florida, and meanwhile they could have enjoyed the other wealth that we have seen is there, for gold and silver are not everywhere that people live.

Therefore I shall earnestly and repeatedly supplicate the king, our lord, and the Spanish nation not to permit that a land so good, which their people have traversed and of which they have taken possession, shall remain outside their empire and dominion, but that they make efforts to conquer and settle it in order to establish there the Catholic faith that they profess, as those of their own nation have done in the other kingdoms and provinces of the New World they have conquered and settled, so that Spain may enjoy this kingdom as well as the others, and so that it may not remain without the light of the evangelical doctrine, which is the chief thing that we should desire, and without the other benefits that can be conferred upon it, both in bettering its moral life and in improving it with the arts and sciences that flourish today in Spain. The natives of that country have great aptitude for these things, since without any teaching except that of their natural instincts they have done and said things so excellent as we have seen and heard. Often in the course of this *History* I have been apprehensive at finding them so civilized, magnificent, and excellent, fearing that it may be suspected that these things were inventions of my own and not virtues of the country. With regard to this, God, our Lord, is my witness that I not only have not added anything to the relation that was given me, but I confess to my own shame and confu-

sion that I have not been able to describe these wonders as they really occurred, as they were recited to me by those who saw them. For this I ask pardon of that whole kingdom and of those who may read this book.

This should be sufficient to cause due credit to be given to him who without claims of interest or hope of rewards from kings or great lords or from anyone else, except that of having told the truth, undertook the labor of writing this *History*, wandering from country to country in ill-health and with excessive discomfort solely in order to give in it an account of what has been discovered in that great kingdom, so that our Catholic faith and the Crown of Spain may be augmented and extended. These are my first and second purposes, and holding to them will assure Divine favor for those who may go on this conquest, which may our Lord direct for the glory and honor of His name, so that the multitude of souls who live in that kingdom without the truth of His doctrine may be converted to it and may not perish. And may He accord me His favor and protection so that hereafter I may employ what remains of my life in writing the history of the Incas, the former kings of El Perú; their origins and beginnings, their idolatry and sacrifices, laws, and customs—in short, their whole commonwealth as it was before the Spaniards won that empire. All the greater part of this is now set in the loom. I shall tell of the Incas and all the rest mentioned what I have heard from my mother and her uncles and ancient relatives, and all the rest of the common people of the country, and from what I managed to see of those antiquities, which were not yet so entirely destroyed in my childhood that some shadows of them did not remain. I shall tell likewise of the discovery and conquest of El Perú what I heard from my father and his contemporaries, who won it, and from the same sources I shall recount the general uprising of the Indians against the Spaniards and the civil wars that took place over the partition between Pizarros and Almagros, for they gave this name to those factions that arose among them for the destruction and punishment of them all.

With regard to the rebellions that took place later in El Perú, I shall state briefly what I heard from those who participated in them on one side or the other, and what I myself saw. Though only a boy, I knew Gonzalo Pizarro and his *maese de campo* Francisco de Carvajal and all his captains, and Don Sebastián de Castilla, and Francisco Hernández Girón, and I am informed of the most important things that the viceroys have done since then in the government of that empire.

XXII

THE NUMBER OF CHRISTIANS, SECULARS AND RELIGIOUS, WHO HAVE DIED IN LA FLORIDA DOWN TO THE YEAR 1568

Having given lengthy accounts of the death of Governor Hernando de Soto and of other principal gentlemen, such as the great and noble captain Andrés de Vasconcelos, a Portuguese Spaniard, and the good Nuño Tovar, an Extremaduran, and of the many other noble and valiant soldiers who died on this expedition, as could have been seen in detail in the *History*, it seems to me that it would be unbecoming not to record the names of the priests, clergy, and religious men who died with them, both those who were then in La Florida and those who have gone afterward to preach the faith of the Holy Mother, the Roman church, which is the reason why they ought not to remain in oblivion. For captains and soldiers as well as priests and religious men died in the service of Christ, our Lord, since one and all went with the same zeal for preaching His holy gospel, the gentlemen to compel the heathen with their arms to subject themselves and come to hear and obey the Christian teachings, and the priests and religious men to oblige and impel them with their good lives and example to believe and imitate them in their Christianity and religion. Speaking first of the seculars, we said that the first Christian who died in this quest was Juan Ponce de León, the first discoverer of La Florida, a gentleman from León who in his childhood was a page of Pedro Núñez de Guzmán, the lord of Toral. All those who went with him died as well, for, as they came out wounded by the Indians, none of them escaped. I was unable to ascertain their number, except that it exceeded eighty men. Then Lucas Vázquez de Ayllón went, and he also died at the hands of the Floridos, along with more than 220 Christians whom he took with him. Following Lucas Vázquez de Ayllón, Pánphilo de Narváez went with four hundred Spaniards, no more than four of whom escaped. The rest died, some at the hands of the enemy, some drowned at sea, and those who escaped the sea simply died of hunger. Ten years after Pánphilo de Narváez, the adelantado Hernando de Soto went to La Florida, taking a thousand Spaniards from all the provinces of Spain. More than seven hundred of them perished. Thus those Christians who have died in that country, along with their commanders up to the year mentioned, exceed fourteen hundred. It remains now to tell of the priests and religious men who have died there.

Those for whom information is available are the ones who went with Hernando de Soto, and those who have gone there since. Of those who accompanied Juan Ponce de León, and the ones who went with Lucas Vázquez de Ayllón and Pánphilo de Narváez, there is no more mention in their histories than if they had never existed. Twelve priests went with Hernando de Soto, as we said at the beginning of this *History*, in Chapter 6. Eight of them were clergymen and four more were friars. Four of the eight clergymen died in the first year that they entered La Florida, and hence their names are not remembered. Dionisio de París, a Frenchman from the great city of Paris, and Diego de Bañuelos, a native of the city of Córdoba, both clerics, and Fray Francisco de la Rocha, a friar of the profession of the Most Holy Trinity and a native of Badajoz, died of illness in the lifetime of Governor Hernando de Soto. Since they had no physician or apothecary, if nature did not cure him who fell ill, there was no remedy through human skill. The other five, who were Rodrigo de Gallegos, a native of Sevilla, and Francisco del Pozo, a native of Córdoba, cleric priests, and Fray Juan de Torres from Sevilla, of the Order of the seraphic father St. Francis, and Fray Juan Gallegos of Sevilla, and Fray Luis de Soto, a native of Villanueva de Barcarrota, both of the Order of the divine St. Dominic, all of them of good life and example, died following the death of the adelantado Hernando de Soto, during those great hardships they experienced in going and returning on that long and ill-advised journey that they made in order to reach the lands of México, and in those which they suffered before embarking. Though because they were priests, their companions protected them in every way they could (where there was as great scarcity of comforts as there was an excess of hardships), they could not escape with their lives, and thus they all remained in that kingdom. These men, besides their piety and priesthood, were all nobles, and while they lived they performed their office in a manner well befitting religious men, confessing and inspiring to a good death those who were dying, and teaching and baptizing the Indians who remained in the service of the Spaniards. After the year 1549, five friars of the Order of St. Dominic went to La Florida. The emperor Charles V, king of Spain, sent them at his expense because they offered to go and preach the gospel to those heathen without taking soldiers with them, going alone in order not to alarm those barbarians. But the latter were still disturbed from the past expeditions, and would not listen to the religious' teachings. On the contrary, as soon as three of them set foot on the shore, they killed them with rage and cruelty. Among them died the good father Fray Luis Cáncer de Balbastro, who went as leader of his people, and had petitioned the emperor very insistently [to be

allowed to make] that expedition, in the desire of augmenting the Catholic faith. Thus he died for it like a true son of the Order of Preachers. I did not learn from what country he was, nor the names of his companions; I should like very much to record here the one and the other. In the year 1566, three religious men of the holy Company of Jesus passed to La Florida with the same zeal as those mentioned above. He who went as superior was Maestro Pedro Martínez, a native of the famous kingdom of Aragón. It is renowned through the world in that, being so small in extent, it should have been so great in the valor and courage of its sons, who have performed the great exploits that are recounted in its histories and in others. He was a native of a village of Teruel. As soon as he went ashore the Indians killed him. Two companions whom he took with him, one a priest named Juan Rogel and the other a brother named Francisco de Villa Real, went back to La Havana, much grieved at being unable to carry out their desires of preaching and teaching the Christian doctrine to those heathen.

In the year 1568, eight religious men of the same Company went to La Florida, two priests and six brothers. He who went as superior was named Bautista de Segura, a native of Toledo, and the other priest was called Luis de Quirós, a native of Xerex de la Frontera. I did not learn the native countries of the six brothers, whose names were as follows: Juan Bautista Méndez, Gabriel de Solís, Antonio Zavallos, Cristóbal Redondo, Gabriel Gómez, and Pedro de Linares. They took with them an Indian lord of vassals who was a native of La Florida. We ought to tell how he came to be in Spain. It happened that the adelantado Pedro Menéndez went to La Florida three times from the year 1563 to that of 1568 to drive away from that coast certain French corsairs who were attempting to establish and settle themselves there.⁴⁸ On the second of those voyages he brought back seven Florido Indians who came willingly, wearing the same dress that we have described, in which they go about in their own country. They also brought the very fine bows and arrows they make for use on state occasions. When the Indians were passing through one of the villages of Córdoba, as they were taking them to Madrid so that his Majesty the king, Don Felipe II, could see them, the author who gave me the relation of this *History*, who lived there, knowing that Indians from La Florida were passing that way, came out to the camp to see them and asked them from what province they were. So that they might know that he had been in that kingdom, he asked them whether they were from Vitachuco, or Apalache, or Mauvila, or Chicaça, or some

⁴⁸See note 45.

other where they had had great battles. Seeing that Spaniard was one of those who went with Governor Hernando de Soto, the Indians looked at him with hostile eyes and said to him: "Since you left those provinces in the ruinous state that you did, do you think that we are going to give you news of them?" They would not answer him further, and talking among themselves, they said (according to the interpreter who came with them) that each one of them would more willingly give him arrow-shots than the news he asked for. So saying (in order to show their desire to shoot the arrows and their skill in doing so), two of them discharged arrows into the air with such force that they were lost to view. In relating this to me, my author told me that he was afraid they were going to shoot them at him, in view of the mad and fearless nature of those Indians, especially in feats of arms and boldness. Those seven Indians were baptized here, and six of them died within a short time. The one who was left was a lord of vassals, and he asked permission to return to his own country, making great promises of what he would do as a good Christian in the conversion of his vassals to the Catholic faith, as well as the rest of the Indians of that whole kingdom. For this reason the religious men admitted him into their company, thinking that he would help them as he had promised. Thus they went to La Florida and entered many leagues into the interior country, crossing great swamps and marshes, and not wishing to take soldiers so as not to alarm the Indians with arms. When the cacique had them in his own country where he thought he could kill them at his pleasure, he told them to wait for him there, that he was going four or five leagues beyond to prepare the Indians of that province to hear the Christian teachings willingly and peacefully, and that he would return within eight days. The religious men waited for him fifteen days, and when they saw that he was not coming back they sent Father Luis de Quirós and one of the brothers to the pueblo where he had said he was going. Don Luis [the Indian] and many others of his people, seeing them in his presence, killed them with great rage and cruelty without saying a word to them, like an apostate traitor. Before the other religious ones should learn of their companions' deaths and go to some other, neighboring province for safety, they attacked them on the following day with great impetus and fury, as if they had been a squadron of armed soldiers. Hearing the noise of the Indians and seeing the weapons they carried in their hands, the religious men fell on their knees to receive the death that they were going to give them for preaching the faith of Christ, our Lord. The heathen gave it most cruelly, and thus they ended their present lives like good religious people, to enjoy eternal life. The Indians having killed them, they opened a chest they carried containing books of

the holy Scriptures, breviaries, missals, and ornaments for saying mass. Each one of them took the ornament that struck his fancy and put it on to suit himself, mocking and making light of that majesty and richness and holding it to be a mean and vile thing. While the others were leaping and dancing about in the ornaments, three of the Indians took out a crucifix that was in the chest, and while they were looking at it they suddenly fell dead. All the rest of them fled, throwing the ornaments in which they had dressed themselves on the ground. The father maestro, Pedro de Ribadeneyra, also wrote of this incident. Thus these eighteen priests, ten belonging to the four Orders that we have named and eight being clergymen, and the six brothers of the holy Company, making twenty-four in all, are the ones who have died in La Florida up to the year 1568 in preaching the holy gospel. There are in addition the fourteen hundred secular Spaniards who went to that country in four expeditions, whose blood I hope in God is not crying out and pleading for revenge like that of Abel, but for mercy like that of Christ, our Lord, so that those heathen may attain the knowledge of His eternal Majesty, under the obedience of our mother the holy Roman church, and thus it is to be believed and hoped that a land that has been watered so many times with so much Christian blood may bear fruit in accordance with this watering of Catholic blood that has spilled upon it. Glory and honor be to God, our Lord, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Three Persons and the only true God. Amen.

THE END

He left them in Córdoba in the power and custody of a printer, and busied himself with other matters in the interest of his Order, abandoning his accounts, which were not yet in proper form for printing. I saw them and they were in very bad condition, half of them having been consumed by moths and mice. They covered more than a ream of paper. [The above statement appears at the end of the last page of the text of the 1605 edition but is not included in the text in the 1723 edition. Apparently it refers to the accounts collected by Fray Pedro Aguado, mentioned in the "Preface to the Reader" at the beginning of the present volume—CS.]